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SHEATS' STRONG PLEA FOR STATE UNIFORMITY

FORMER SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION DECLARES THAT TEACHERS AND SUPERINTENDENTS ARE CATSPAWS OF AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY.

THE RESOLUTION THAT DIDN'T PASS.

Resolved, That the Superintendents, in convention assembled, are in favor of a Uniform System of Text Books, said books to be selected by a committee of five to be selected by the County Superintendents Convention, and five teachers holding State certificates selected by the Florida Educational Association and the State Superintendent. The books to be adopted gradually at the expiration of the present contracts now existing in the counties."

It was no unexpected thing that happened yesterday at the meeting of County School Superintendents of Public Instruction when the question of State School Book Uniformity was precipitated and acted upon.

THE SUN told in advance what the action of the County Superintendents would be. THE SUN made a forecast that the Superintendents would come to Tallahassee organized to oppose State Uniformity. If this action had been different it would have been surprising. But it happened just as THE SUN said it would happen.

But there were some surprises at the convention, because it developed that there are some Superintendents who have independence of thought, not stultified by the interests of any book concern.

Among the incidents of note was the appearance of Mr. A. I. Branham, the special representative of the American Book Company, at the meeting, and his application to be heard upon a personal matter. There appeared no reason why Mr. Branham should appear before the convention. It was perhaps only a coincidence that his note of application to be heard was read when under a special order the question of State Uniformity was called.

Mr. W. S. M. Pinkham, who had moved that the sentiment of the convention should be registered against any bill pending in the Legislature or that might be introduced to effect State Uniformity, was the first to oppose the granting of the privilege that Mr. Branham had asked. Mr. Branham had stated that he did not desire to speak on the subject of uniformity, but upon a personal matter.

"If he doesn't desire to speak upon the question of State Uniformity, which is the special order," said Mr. Pinkham, "then I make the point of order that he has no right to recognition."

This stand, which was firmly taken by Mr. Pinkham, and supported by others, met instant opposition from the other side of the house, which stated that it desired no gag rule and would hear from Mr. Branham at all hazards. It mattered not upon what he wanted to speak, they were willing to hear from him.

In spite of the confusion which prevailed for some minutes, it was discernible that the sentiment was in favor of hearing what the representative of the American Book Company had to say, and when the vote was finally determined this way, the suave representative of the American Book Company arose and stated that no one could be more sensible than he of the impropriety of addressing the meeting upon a subject foreign to that under consideration, so he, A. I. Branham, special representative of the American Book Company, who had been granted the privilege of the floor in a meeting of County Superintendents met to consider legislation for the people of the State as representative of the people, declined to be heard upon his personal matter until after the consideration of the question at issue.

As the appearance of Mr. Branham before the meeting of County Superintendents is of the prime importance, inasmuch as there was no excuse for his presence there, this matter will be treated first.

The personal matter upon which Mr. Branham had to relieve himself was the attack which THE SUN has been making upon the American Book Company and its methods.

He read a paragraph from an issue of THE SUN, which stated that the American Book Company sold books in Georgia at a price thirty per cent cheaper than the books sold in Florida. He declared that the paragraph was a libel of the American Book Company, and that at the proper time he would prove it in the courts.

He stated that he acquitted Mr. L'Engle, the editor of THE SUN, and THE SUN of any libel of the American Book Company, but that agents of the "Book Combine" were responsible for the statement, that he had names and would produce them at the proper time.

Mr. Branham stated that if the State of Florida desired to have the books that were furnished at reduced prices in Georgia that the American Book Company would furnish them tomorrow at the Georgia prices. He said that it had been an effort of the American Book Company to keep the inferior books furnished in the State of Georgia in the background, but if Florida wanted them they could be had.

It is impossible to state what effect the language of the representative of the American Book Company had upon the company. But it might be questioned how he could absolve the editor of THE SUN and THE SUN from publishing a libel of the American Book Company and then seek resources against his business rivals.

Mr. Branham stated that he had the names of the per-

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TO SETTLE I. I. FUND; DISCHARGE TRUSTEES

FARRIS' BILL PROVIDES FOR TERMINATION OF TRUST AND ABOLITION OF TRUSTEES WHEN FINAL DISPOSITION OF ASSETS IS MADE

Representative Farris of Duval introduced a bill in the House yesterday having for its purpose the settlement of the Internal Improvement Fund and discharge of the trustees.

Following is the text of the bill:

"Whereas, the paramount interest and welfare of the people of the State of Florida demands the immediate adjudication and settlement of the questions involving the validity of the legislative and grants to railroads and canal companies of the State of Florida, and the claims of the trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund to a prior title in them to the lands so granted or attempted to be granted by the legislature; and,

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whereas, The management of said fund and the litigation in which the said Trustees are now involved affecting said fund is productive of great expense to the fund and has resulted in criticism upon the Trustees; therefore,

Be it Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida: "Section 1. That it shall be the duty of the Attorney-General of this State, as soon as practicable after the passage of this act, to file a bill in equity in the Circuit Court of Leon County, in said State, in the names and in behalf of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund as complainants, for directions as to the final distribution and disposition of all the remaining assets and properties of such fund, and shall make all railroad corporations and canal companies to whom grants of land from such fund have heretofore been made by the Legislature of Florida, or their assigns, parties defendant to such bill; and by such bill shall seek the advice, direction and decree of the court as to the validity of all and every such grants of land to said railroad corporations and canal companies and the trusts, if any, to which such grants were made subject, and as to which of said land grant railroad companies and canal companies, if any, are entitled to priority in the distribution of the lands and properties now remaining unsold and unconveyed in the hands of such Trustees and to the cash proceeds of lands heretofore sold and conveyed that were subject to any such prior grant or grants.

"Sec. 2. That upon compliance by the said Trustees with the order of the court which may be made in said cause, they shall be forever discharged from the further administration of such trust.

"Sec. 3. That all laws or parts of laws in conflict with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed, and this act shall take effect immediately upon its passage."

AULKNER WANTS ELECTION FOR PROHIBITION.

State prohibition of liquor got into the House yesterday when Mr. Faulkner of Taylor introduced a bill to call an election for such purpose. He also had another bill relating to local option. This makes three bills on the subject of liquor regulation that Mr. Faulkner has introduced.

Work on the calendar was industriously carried on yesterday in the House, and much progress was made toward getting legislative work in shape to make effective disposition thereof.

Inattention of members breaks the Legislative Circuit, however, and this happened with regret yesterday when House Bill No. 128 was being considered.

The reading clerk, thinking to hasten the work, read the bill, when put on its passage, as rapidly as possible, and the House was congratulating itself upon getting rid of the tedious duty of listening to a "purely local bill," when Mr. Willis of Gadsden announced that he had not clearly understood the bill, and asked that it be read again. The House smiled audibly at its own discomfiture, and the bill was read again, with nobody but Mr. Willis listening to it.

The bill to protect the fresh water fish in Wakulla County was passed, but not until Mr. Griggs of Franklin attempted to

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SENATE CREATES MORE CLERKSHIP SINECURES

THREE MORE SOFT JOBS TO BE HANDED OUT—COMPULSORY EDUCATION BILL STABBED TO DEATH—DEBATE OVER EQUALIZATION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT.

Three committee clerks were granted by the Senate yesterday, when the time of one would have been enough, and then some.

Although nays were sounded along the line on the adoption of the resolutions, the negative sound was not sufficiently loud to cause a division.

Senator Hudson perpetrated the ancient joke of the Senate, somewhat late, however, by asking for a clerk to the Committees on Commerce and Navigation and Indian Affairs. One bill was referred to the latter committee last session, while Commerce and Navigation seems to have had a goose egg.

Senator Henderson, who had already provided one clerkship snap—to the Committee on Railroads—dug up another one yesterday—clerk to the Committee on Education, which handled about thirty bills last session.

Senator Leggett asked for his and got it—clerk to the Committees on Mining and Phosphate, and on Recorded Proceedings. The former may have a bill referred to it, the latter has but little doing.

Thus far the Senate has fifteen committee clerks on the payroll, while the last Senate fared very well with ten and a stenographer.

Expression against drainage and reclamation of the Everglades found vent in the Senate when Senator Beard introduced a bill to repeal Chapter 5377, Acts of 1905, which is better known as the Drainage law, creating the Board of Drainage Commissioners, etc.

Matters moved along serenely in the Senate yesterday until the bill providing for compulsory education was taken up, when Senator Buckman, who had been docile up to that time, pulled his hunting knife and slashed the measure to pieces.

Senator Buckman said he was opposed to the bill for many reasons. One was that conditions in the State were such that a certain class of labor could not be taken away without industrial injury. Another reason for his opposition was that more funds would be needed for negro education. If the measure were a wise one, cost should not be questioned, said the Senator, but if unwise, then it should be defeated.

Senator West of the Fourth, author of the bill, defended it by asserting that much money was spent on schools and the attendance was not in proportion to the cost. He believed that compulsory education was necessary that the full benefit of these schools could be attained.

Senator Beard, however, took another view of the matter, because, he said, such measure partakes of a species of paternalism that is not in accordance with our form of government.

"The Government provides schools," said Senator Beard, "but it should not invade the home."

The opposition prevailed, the bill being defeated, yeas, 7; nays, 15.

Another breeze was created over the bill to render valid, until revoked, teachers' certificates. This time Senator Beard was on the defensive, but his argument proved unavailing, and his measure was tossed about and plucked to pieces until it died by a vote of 6 yeas to 17 nays.

The star performance of the morning's work, though, was action on the bill of Senator Crews, relating to taxes on personal property and equalization of assessment of same by Board of County Commissioners.

After Senator Crews had explained the measure and appealed for support of the bill, Senator Cone took the floor against it, urging that taxes would be increased on real property of residents of Florida thereby, as a great portion of Florida property was owned by non-residents, who had no personal property here to assess.

Vigorously did he contend against the bill on this ground, but Senator Humphries quickly demolished that line of argument by saying it was "one of the best bills that had ever been introduced," and then proceeded to tell why it was so.

Senator Buckman contributed his share to the discussion, saying that there was no reason why personal property should not bear the same proportion of tax as real property. He declared that it was a good bill and should pass.

Senator Henderson, in support of the bill, said that five men could do better than one man in arriving at a conclusion of just values, and therefore better equalization of personal property would result if the bill became a law.

The Senate accepted this view, and the bill was passed, the vote being: Yeas—Mr. President, Senators Alford, Beard, Broome, Buckman, Canova, Crane, Crews, Girar-

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REPRESENTATIVE FARRIS.



What Clarke of Jefferson got when he asked for a Committee Clerk. The Senate is not so rude.



M. Knight of Citrus Has a Bill to Offer.